Excerpts From President Reagan's Speech on Foreign Policy and Congress

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WASHINGTON, April 6 — Following are excerpts from President Reagan's speech today at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies, as made available by the White House:

All Americans share two great goals for foreign policy: a safer world and a world in which individual rights can be respected and precious values may flourish.

During the past three years we have been steadily rebuilding America's capacity to advance our foreign policy goals through renewed attention to these vital principles. Many threats remain and peace may still seem precarious. But America is safer and more secure today because the people of this great nation have restored the foundation of its strength.

When we took office in 1981, the Soviet Union had been engaged for 20 years in the most massive military buildup in history. Clearly, their goal was not to catch us but to surpass us. Yet the United States remained a virtual spectator in the 1970's, a decade of neglect that took a severe toll on our defense capabilities.

With bipartisan support, we embarked immediately on a major defense rebuilding program. We've made good progress in restoring the morale of our men and women in uniform, restocking spare parts and ammunition, replacing obsolescent equipment and facilities, improving basic training and readiness and pushing forward with long-overdue weapons programs.

Peace Through Strength

The simple fact is that in the last half of the 1970's we were not deterring, as events from Angola and Afghanistan made clear. Today we are, and that fact has fundamentally altered the future for millions of human beings. Gone are the days when the United States was perceived as a rudderless superpower, a helpless hostage to world events. American leadership is back. Peace through strength is not a slogan, it's a fact of life — and we will not return to the days of handwringing, defeatism, decline and despair.

We have also upgraded significantly our intelligence capabilities — restoring morale in the intelligence agencies and increasing our capability to detect, analyze and counter hostile intelligence threats.

Talks With Moscow

Our principles don't involve just rebuilding our strength; they also tell us how to use it. We remain true to the principle of nonaggression. On an occasion when the United States, at the request of its neighbors, did use force — in Grenada — we acted decisively but only after it was clear a bloodthirsty regime had put American and Grenadian lives, and the security of neighboring islands, in danger. As soon as stability and freedom were restored on the island, we left.

Though we and the Soviet Union differ markedly, living in this nuclear age makes it imperative that we talk with each other. If the new Soviet leadership truly is devoted to building a safer and more humane world rather than expanding armed conquests, it will find a sympathetic partner in the West.

In pursuing these practical principles, we have throughout sought to revive the spirit that was once the hallmark of our postwar foreign policy — bipartisan cooperation between the executive and the legislative branches of our Government.

Much has been accomplished but much remains to be done. If Republicans and Democrats will join together to confront four great challenges to American foreign policy in the 80's, then we can and will make great strides toward a safer and more humane world.

Nuclear War and Arms

Challenge number one is to reduce the risk of nuclear war and to reduce the levels of nuclear armaments in a way that also reduces the risks they will ever be used. We have no higher challenge, for a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. But merely to be against nuclear war is not enough to prevent it.

By the beginning of this decade, we faced three growing problems: the Soviet SS-20 monopoly in Europe and Asia, the vulnerability of our land-based ICBM force and the failure of arms control agreements to slow the overall growth in strategic weapons. The Carter Administration acknowledged these problems. In fact, almost everyone did.

Our strategic policy represents a careful response to a nuclear agenda upon which even our critics agreed. Many who would break the bonds of partisanship, claiming they know how to bring greater security, seem to ignore the likely consequences of their own proposals.

Those who wanted a last-minute moratorium on I.N.F. deployment would have betrayed our allies and reduced the chances for a safer Europe; those who would try to implement a unilateral freeze would find it unverifiable an destabilizing because it would prevent restoration of a stable balance that keeps the peace, and those who would advocate unilateral cancellation of the Peacekeeper missile would ignore a central recommendation of the bipartisan Scowcroft report and leave the Soviets with little incentive to negotiate meaningful reductions. Indeed, the Soviets would be rewarded for leaving the bargaining table.

The New York Times/George Tames

President Reagan speaking on foreign policy at Georgetown University.

Helping Troubled Regions

Our second great challenge is strengthening the basis for stability in troubled and strategically sensitive regions.

Obviously no single abstract policy could deal successfully with all problems or all regions. But as a general matter, effective regional stabilization requires a balanced approach — a mix of economic aid, security assistance and diplomatic mediation — tailored to the needs of each region.

Perhaps the best example of this comprehensive approach is the report and recommendations of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America. It is from this report that we drew our proposals for bringing peaceful development to Central America. They are now before the Congress.

Other critics say that we shouldn't see the problems of this or any other region as an East-West struggle. Our policies in Central America and elsewhere are in fact designed precisely to keep East-West tensions from spreading, from intruding into the lives of nations that are struggling with great problems of their own. Events in southern Africa are showing what persistent mediation and an ability to talk to all sides can accomplish.

The states of this region have been poised for war for decades, but there is new hope for peace. South Africa, Angola and Mozambique are implementing agreements to break the cycle of violence. Our Administration has been active in this process and we will stay involved, trying to bring an independent Namibia into being, end foreign military interference and keep the region free from East-West conflict.

In Central America we have also seen progress. El Salvador's presidential elections express that nation's desire to govern itself in peace. Yet the future of the region remains open. We have a choice: Either we help America's friends defend themselves and give democracy a chance or we abandon our responsibilities and let the Soviet Union and Cuba shape the destiny of our hemisphere. If this happens, the East-West conflict will only become broader and much more dangerous.

In the Middle East, which has so rarely known peace, we seek a similar mix of economic aid, diplomatic mediation and military assistance and cooperation. These will, we believe, make the use of U.S. forces unnecessary and make the risk of East-West conflict less. But given the importance of the region, we must also be ready to act when the presence of American power and that of our friends can help stop the spread of violence.

Because effective regional problem-solving requires a balanced and sustained approach, it is essential that the Congress give full, not piecemeal, support. Indeed, where we have foundered in regional stabilization it has been because the Congress has failed to provide such support. Halfway measures — refusing to take responsibility for means — produce the worst possible results.

Economics and Liberty

Expanding opportunities for economic development and personal freedom is our third great challenge. The American concept of peace is more than absence of war. We favor the flowering of economic growth and individual liberty in a world of peace.

Just as we believe incentives are key to greater growth in America and throughout the world, so, too, must we resist the sugar-coated poison of protectionism everywhere it exists. Here at home, we're opposing inflationary, self-defeating bills like Domestic Content.

We are helping developing countries grow by presenting a fresh view of development — the magic of the marketplace — to spark greater growth and participation in the international economy. Developing nations earn twice as much from exports to the United States as they received in aid from all other nations combined.

We have recently sent to the Congress a new economic policy initiative for Africa. It, too, is designed to support the growth of private enterprise in African countries by encouraging structural economic change and international trade.

Bipartisan Foreign Policy

This brings me to our fourth great challenge: We must restore bipartisan consensus in support of U.S. foreign policy. We must restore America's honorable tradition of partisan politics stopping at the water's edge. Republicans and Democrats standing united in patriotism and speaking with one voice as responsible trustees for peace, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.

In the 1970's, we saw a rash of Congressional initiatives to limit the President's authority in the areas of trade, human rights, arms sales, foreign assistance, intelligence operations and the dispatch of troops in times of crisis. Over a hundred separate prohibitions and restrictions on executive branch authority to formulate and implement foreign policy were enacted.

The most far-reaching consequence of the past decade's Congressional activism is this: Bipartisan consensus-building has become a central responsibility of Congressional leadership as well as of executive leadership. If we are to have a sustainable foreign policy, the Congress must support the practical details of policy, not just the general goals.

Successes and Failures

We have demonstrated the capacity for such jointly responsible leadership in certain areas. But we have seen setbacks for bipartisanship, too. I believe that once we established bipartisan agreement on our course in Lebanon, the subsequent second-guessing about whether to keep our men there severely undermined our policy. It hindered the ability of our diplomats to negotiate, encouraged more intransigence from the Syrians and prolonged the violence.

To understand and solve this problem of joint responsibility, we have to go beyond the familiar questions as to who should be stronger, the President or the Congress. The more basic problem is: In this post-Vietnam era, Congress has not yet developed capacities for coherent, responsible action needed to carry out the new foreign policy powers it has taken for itself. To meet the challenges of this decade, we need a strong President and a strong Congress.

Unfortunately, many in the Congress seem to believe they are still in the troubled Vietnam era, with their only task to be vocal critics, not responsible partners in developing positive, practical programs to solve real problems.

Lessons of Vietnam

Much was learned from Vietnam — lessons ranging from increased appreciation of the need for careful discrimination in the use of U.S. force or military assistance, to increased appreciation of the need for domestic support for any such military element or policy. Military force, either direct or indirect, must remain an available part of America's foreign policy. But, clearly, the Congress is less than wholly comfortable with both the need for a military element in foreign policy and its own responsibility to deal with that element.

Presidents must recognize Congress as a more significant partner in foreign policy making and, as we have tried to do, seek new means to reach bipartisan executive-legislative consensus. But legislators must realize that they, too, are partners. They have a responsibility to go beyond mere criticism to consensus-building that will produce positive, practical and effective action.

REAGAN CRITICIZES ROLE OF CONGRESS

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aid to El Salvador, said the speech was "an outrageous attempt to blame Congress for his own failures in foreign policy."

"I regard Ronald Reagan as the most dangerous President of the nuclear age," he said in explaining his refusal to back Mr. Reagan's military buildup and his other policies.

Mr. Reagan's speech today broke no new ground in foreign policy. Robert C. McFarlane, his national security adviser, said the address was meant to lay the groundwork for speeches on more specific issues.

The Timing of Criticism

Mr. McFarlane originally briefed reporters with the understanding that he not be identified. But Larry Speakes, the White House spokesman, inadvertently identified Mr. McFarlane as the briefer today during his regular news conference.

In outlining what he said was the President's thinking on the role Congress should play, Mr. McFarlane said that "full and open debate and criticism is fine" before a policy decision was made.

But once a decision has been made, there should be only "full and private criticism," Mr. McFarlane said. He said this could take the form of confidential letters to the President and private meetings with him.

In his remarks on Tuesday, Mr. Shultz said there were so many restrictions imposed by law on the President's ability to act that they hampered creation of an effective national policy.

The Role of Military Force

Mr. Reagan, continuing that criticism today, said that "military force, either direct or indirect, must remain an available part of America's foreign policy."

"But clearly, the Congress is less than wholly comfortable with both the need for a military element in foreign policy and its own responsibility to deal with that element," he said.

"If we are to have a sustainable foreign policy, the Congress must support the practical details of policy, not just the general goals," he said. "We have demonstrated the capacity for such jointly responsible leadership in certain areas. But we have seen setbacks for bipartisanship, too."

He said that after agreement was reached with Congress last October on a joint resolution to keep the marines in Lebanon for 18 months, "the subsequent second-guessing about whether to keep our men there severely undermined our policy."

Mr. Reagan was speaking of the debate begun by House Democrats in January on withdrawing the marines after publication in December of the Long commission report. That report, sponsored by the Pentagon, criticized the sending of marines to Lebanon and said more attention should be paid to diplomatic efforts to withdraw them.

The New York Times/George Tames

Listening to President's speech are, from left, Edwin Meese 3d, counselor to Mr. Reagan; Robert C. McFarlane, national security adviser, and Michael K. Deaver, White House deputy chief of staff.

The debate in Congress, he said, "hindered the ability of our diplomats to negotiate, encouraged more intransigence from the Syrians and prolonged the violence."

The Effect on Syria

Mr. Shultz has said that once the debate began, Syria concluded that the marines would be withdrawn because of opposition in the United States and it thus had no need to force the Druse or Shiites in Lebanon to make any political concessions to end the turmoil there.

"Similarly, Congressional wavering on support" for the Kissinger commission report on Central America, which calls for large increases in aid, "can only encourage the enemies of democracy who are determined to wear us down," Mr. Reagan said.

"Presidents must recognize Congress as a more significant partner in foreign policy making, and, as we have tried to do, seek new means to reach bipartisan executive-legislative consensus," he said. "But legislators must realize that they, too, are partners. They have a responsibility to go beyond mere criticism to consensus building that will produce positive, practical and effective action."

Mr. Reagan said that "we must restore bipartisan consensus in support of U.S. foreign policy."

"We must restore," he said, "America's honorable tradition of partisan politics stopping at the water's edge, Republicans and Democrats standing united in patriotism, and speaking with one voice as responsible trustees for peace, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law."

Virtually every President has had problems in foreign policy with Congress, given the balance of powers written into the Constitution. But in the immediate postwar years, administrations were able to work out compromises with the leaders of Congress to help insure passage of important foreign policy legislation.

Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, the Republican leader, is often credited with helping President Truman obtain passage of legislation permitting the United States to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and providing enormous military and economic aid to Europe through the Marshall Plan and to other countries fighting Communist threats.

Likewise, President Eisenhower was able to work out arrangements with Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, the majority leader, that insured passage of key legislation. By the time Mr. Johnson was President, however, the ability to work out such arrangements with Congressional leaders had broken down over Vietnam.

Today, Mr. O'Neill, who on Thursday accused Mr. Reagan of being responsible for the deaths of the marines in Lebanon, said the President "has no credibility on Lebanon and no credibility on bipartisan foreign policy."

He said that Mr. Reagan had made his reputation "and advanced his political career" not by being "a bipartisan supporter of our foreign policy, but as perennial critic" on matters ranging from the strategic arms limitation treaty to the Panama Canal to Vietnam.

When asked about Mr. Reagan's record in opposition to bipartisan foreign policy achievements, Mr. McFarlane said, "I think there's been a certain evolution in his thinking."

Reagan Tells of Gaffe With Mrs. Mitterrand

WASHINGTON, April 6 (AP) — President Reagan departed from the text of his foreign policy address today to speak of one of the "intricacies of diplomacy" that he said had almost caused an international incident.

He said that at a state dinner on March 22 he was escorting Danielle Mitterrand, the wife of the French President, to the table when she suddenly stopped.

"She calmly turned her head and said something to me in French, which unfortunately I did not understand," he said. "And the butler was motioning for us to come on, and I motioned to her that we should go forward, that we were to go to the other side of the room. And again, very calmly, she made her statement to me."

The interpreter finally caught up with them, Mr. Reagan said, and explained that Mrs. Mitterrand "was telling me I was standing on her gown."

The audience, which had sat quietly through the President's 38-minute speech, burst into laughter and applause as he left the room.

President vs. Congress

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credibility" to seek bipartisanship because, accord to Mr. O'Neill, the President had not leveled with Congress on Lebanon or other issues.

This evening White House officials expressed dismay at the turn of events.

For at least a month, the White House officials said, Mr. Reagan had planned to give an address on the historic problems of Congress seeking to exercise its prerogatives in foreign policy. A recent flurry of difficulties on Capitol Hill for Administrative initiatives gave the speech some urgency, White House aides said.

There was some conciliatory language in the speech, such as Mr. Reagan's statement that "Presidents must recognize Congress as a more significant partner in foreign policy making." But the plea for bipartisanship may have been undercut by sharp attacks on critics of his policies.

Mixes Appeals With Reprimands

Warning against "simplistic solutions" in dealing with Moscow, for example, Mr. Reagan said "bipartisanship can only work if both sides face up to real-world problems — and meet them with real-world solutions." He then appealed for support of increased military spending.

At another point, regarding Central America, Mr. Reagan said: "I welcome a debate. But if it is to be productive we must put aside mythology and uninformed rhetoric." This was an appeal for support of his aid package to El Salvador and to rebels seeking to overthrow the Government of Nicaragua.

To his critics today, Mr. Reagan sounded as though he was asking for support, but only on his terms.

And because the President again suggested that criticism of his policies in Lebanon had invited terrorist attacks, Democrats charged that Mr. Reagan was blaming the Congress for his own "failures" in protecting United States marines from attack last fall.

Aide Criticizes Congress

Making matters more complicated, Robert C. McFarlane, the national security adviser, who talked with reporters about the President's speech, went even further than Mr. Reagan in suggesting that criticism of Mr. Reagan's foreign policy was improper.

Mr. McFarlane said Congress "should be encouraged" to disagree with the President in the "formation" of policy. He added, however, that "once that policy is formed, it can seriously undermine its hope of success if there is a continuing repetition of this earlier disagreement."

At another point, referring to the Senate and the House of Representatives, Mr. McFarlane said that "if there is to be an effective U.S. foreign policy, the squabbling between or among 535 members has to come to a stop."

He said that once a policy is formed, members of the Congress who want to criticize it should do so in writing to the President, but not in public forums, at least concerning such situations as Lebanon, where American lives were at stake.

There was some irony in Mr. McFarlane's comments, since Mr. Reagan was a critic of the foreign policy of President Ford in 1976 and President Carter in 1980.

Specifically, Mr. Reagan called for rejection of both the Panama Canal Treaty and the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty with the Soviet Union negotiated by Mr. Carter. Both treaties had considerable bipartisan support at the time, although the strategic arms treaty was never ratified.

Asked what had changed, Mr. McFarlane smiled and said, "I think there's been a certain evolution in his thinking, and I don't apologize for that."

The difficulties of managing foreign policy, while seeking continuous approval from Congress for means, have plagued all modern Presidents since since Woodrow Wilson's failure to win Congressional approval for joining the League of Nations after World War I.

Problem Grew in '70's

Many experts say, however, that the problem has grown since the end of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal, when Congressional distrust of Presidential power reached a peak. According to Mr. Reagan, in the last decade Congress has created at least 100 legislative mechanisms hampering Presidential power.

One of the most well-known is the War Powers Act of 1973, which requires a President to notify the Congress if United States forces are in danger, and to withdraw them within 60 days unless there is Congressional approval for them to remain.

The War Powers Act forced Mr. Reagan to bargain with the Congress to keep United States marines in Beirut last year, despite the argument of some in the Administration that the Act is unconstitutional. A debate over the applicability of the War Powers Act is cited by Mr. Reagan as inviting terrorism in Lebanon earlier this year.

More recently, Democrats in Congress have begun saying that the War Powers Act is applicable to United States forces in Honduras and El Salvador, an idea that is anathema to Mr. Reagan.

In arguing for bipartisanship in the "formation" of policy, Mr. Reagan comes to Congress with what his critics view as a major weakness.

The weakness, they charge, is that each time he formed policies in consultation with Congress, he changed some of his basic assumptions without continuing the consultation.

New Bulgarian Envoy to Italy

ROME, April 6 (AP) — Bulgaria's new Ambassador to Italy arrived in Rome today, 15 months after his predecessor was recalled during an investigation into reports of a Bulgarian connection to the shooting of Pope John Paul II. The new Bulgarian Ambassador, Raico Marinov Nicolov, was greeted on arrival at Rome's airport by Soviet and other East European diplomats. Foreign Ministry officials said Italy had also named a new Ambassador to Bulgaria, Giovanni Battistini, and he will leave for Sofia on Monday.